

Candidate for the 58th Southeast Council Godol - Aleph Toby Stanton

My vision for Southeast Council is one of continuity, progress, and future promise. Thanks to the strong leadership and volunteer work shown in our council this past year, we're in a bright place. This next year, I plan to lead the council fervidly and deliberately to apply the same work ethic and commitment demonstrated this past year to resounding relative opportunity. In order to fulfill my vision, we as a council need to have a lucid understanding of our council's strengths and challenges, both independently and as BBYO as a whole.

For the past year, throughout all of BBYO, the biggest obstacle has been the struggle to connect with teens due to the constraints of COVID-19. Because of the resultant disjointment among our chapters, our council must actively rebound with the return of in-person programming. The focal point of these programs will be consistency and quality. I will work with the council S'ganim so that high resolution programming will be encouraged and premade programs will be distributed in program banks applicable to individual chapters, along with monthly council-wide programs. To build strong relationships, communities need to establish routine as well as connection with other Southeast communities.

Our greatest challenge as a council is also our greatest strength: our size. We're smaller than the other councils in our region, but that presents the unique opportunity of being a closer-knit group of teens. Considering the smaller size of our chapters due to a sheer lack of Jews in our respective communities, the chapter experience throughout our council is harder to maintain than it is elsewhere in our order. Therefore, using my experience from serving as council S'gan this past year, I intend to program and coordinate several Southeast Council networking calls throughout the year. This will create a space for teens that may not be extremely active otherwise to participate in icebreakers and lowkey activities to create connections with others from around Southeast's reach outside of their individual chapter. After building the meaningful connections to want to come back, in the return to in-person conventions and region events this year, Southeast teens can feel connected and can recognize a few familiar faces that they can easily talk to.

Because of the difficulty of the engagement and recruitment process this past year with COVID, the vitality and future of our council is heavily dependent on the impact we're able to make on younger members this coming term. To invigorate this process, I aim to help implement a region-wide big-little program that will help shape younger prospective leaders and help retain active upperclassmen.

In 2020 we elected the 57th Dixie Council Board. This year will be the 58th - but first full year of the Southeast Council Board. Through our work, we're all the future of Southeast, so let's make this first year a good one.

